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Voice Culture for Children

A Practical Primer

on the

Training and Preservation of Young Voices

For the Use of Schools, Choirs,
Solo-Boys, etc.

H2246.535

By

James Bates

Director and Founder of the London College for
Choristers

Part I

Paper, 75c
Board, $1.00

THE H. W. GRAY CO.,
SOLE AGENTS FOR
NOVELLO & CO., LT.
21 East 17th ST., NEW YORK.

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Every child should be taught from its youth to govern its voice discreetly and dexterously, as it does its hands; and not to be able to sing should be more disgraceful than not to be able to read or write.

— JOHN RUSKIN, "*Fors Clavigera.*"

PREFACE.

THE primary purpose of this book is to supply a practical primer on the subject of voice-production for children.

With so many subjects pressing for attention, few schools are able to devote very much time to voice-production and singing, however fully the importance of these subjects may be realised. A boy's vocal career, too, is distressingly short, and it is absolutely necessary to secure the best possible results in the shortest time. I am confident that, so far from necessitating a further expenditure of precious hours, teachers will find that these lessons and the accompanying exercises will, in practice, save time.

I have striven throughout to avoid technical and physiological terms and to use only such clear and simple language as youthful scholars can understand. Many of the lessons might, in fact, be read out in class almost word for word, but where explanations are needed the diagrams and illustrations will almost suffice. I have endeavoured always to give the reasons why certain methods are recommended and others deprecated, holding that it is of the utmost importance in singing, where so much depends upon intelligence, that a child should clearly understand the purpose of whatever he or she is asked to do.

My task has been one of some little difficulty, for without going deeply into questions which are better dealt with in more elaborate treatises it is by no means easy to explain the essential principles underlying the production of that pure, refined tone

to which the singing of children, especially boys, owes its transcendent attractiveness.

Reference is more than once made in these pages to the differing vowel pronunciation in the North of England and the South. The matter has a bearing on tone-production the importance of which can hardly be exaggerated, and I am hopeful that the exercises here offered will do something at least towards eliminating that unpleasant "throaty" enunciation which London children (as an example) have a tendency to adopt both in singing and speaking.

My own experience entirely accords with the opinion expressed by other trainers that the generally inferior singing of Southerners is less a matter of *voice* than of *vocalisation*. "Vocalisation for producing perfect voice" may be described as the keynote of these pages.

The tendency to use "tone-cramping" vowels is not confined to elementary school-children. The purer and more refined accent of public school boys, and of pupils of high schools and grammar schools, must not blind us to the fact that vocally there is often great room for improvement, and I am strongly of opinion that a course of exercises such as is here suggested will be found as beneficial in the one case as in the other. A fact which those responsible for the musical training of children ought ever to bear in mind is that the child-voice — important as it is — is of infinitely less consequence than the mature voice. The ultimate aim of all training ought to be not so much to secure good results during the school period — though these will inevitably follow from the judicious use of a proper system — but to inculcate such habits of voice-production as will lay the foundation of a beautiful adult voice. In other words, the child's voice is a sacred trust; a seed to be so tended and care-

fully nurtured that, later, the potentialities within it may have unimpeded development.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the extreme delicacy of the child's voice, yet how often have these frail instruments been irreparably ruined for want of a little knowledge or a little care! Let the teacher sternly discourage anything like "shouty" singing, especially in class or choir, or misguided attempts to sing notes which are too high or too low. It may safely be said that *soft singing* (of course within the compass of the voice) will never do harm, no matter how continuous, but loud singing will inevitably lead to disaster. The teacher who successfully instils the principles of correct singing, and thereby renders possible the life-long use and enjoyment of a pleasing voice, is conferring on his young charges a boon of inestimable value. This thought should be his constant encouragement in times of difficulty and lack of immediate success.

Both the matter and the exercises in this primer represent the cumulative experience of many years. Certain features will probably be new even to experienced teachers. I would direct special attention to the systems of voice-placing and vowel-substitution. They may seem at first to run counter to certain generally accepted ideas, but I am prepared to convince any who may be disposed to doubt their efficacy that they have produced, and will produce, uniformly successful results.

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VOICE CULTURE FOR CHILDREN.

CHAPTER I.

On the Voice; its Use and Preservation.

In the early stages of vocal training the teacher's first and constant care must be to prevent the formation of bad habits. Unless he be exceptionally fortunate, a large proportion of his class, however young, will come to him with faults already developed. These should receive immediate attention, not only because the longer a habit is allowed to continue the more difficult it is to check, but because with young singers a wrong use of the delicate apparatus producing what we call "voice" may easily result — frequently does result — in lasting and even life-long injury.

At the very outset, children should be impressed with the fact that if they would sing well, or even sing at all, *the voice must be used most carefully.*

The voice a delicate instrument.

Many children, particularly those who are easily discouraged and those whose natural musical abilities are below the average, are apt to form an idea that because their progress is not so rapid as that of others in the class their voices are not worth troubling about, the care of the voice being all very well for those who may hope to become good singers, but that the ordinary boy and girl with no special musical ambition can misuse it with impunity. But just as every private's knapsack may be said to hold within it

a marshal's baton, so to the experienced trainer every young voice suggests incalculable possibilities, and children should be taught to value their voices not only for what they are but for what they may become. The very finest singers have frequently been produced from the most unpromising material.

Importance of a pleasing voice in later life.

There is another way of putting the matter to them. By rough and careless usage children may not only prevent their voices from ever improving but may entirely spoil them. This means that when they become men and women their voices, instead of being musical and pleasant both in singing and in speaking, will be gruff and harsh. It may be true, as the Winchester College motto has it, that "manners makyth man," but children should early realise that the very best behaviour will not atone for a rough, repellent voice.

Let it be pointed out that their present voices — frail and delicate — can in any event be of but short duration, and will be succeeded after about two years of transition by the permanent, life-long voice, the importance of which to their future happiness and well-being it is impossible to over-estimate. Just as it would be folly to expect a bruised and broken bulb to produce a perfect flower, so it is impossible for a voice that has been badly used and treated ever to regain in maturity the qualities lost in childhood.

A sure way to spoil the voice.

There are many ways of spoiling the voice, but the surest of all is constantly to sing loudly. Many children — and adults, too — make the mistake of supposing themselves to be singing when they are only shouting. We shall see directly how this mistake arises, but if the effect of such misuse of the voice is bad for listeners, it is ten times worse for the singers themselves, and a few minutes'

shouting may easily do harm that can never be undone. Children should be taught not to try at first to make their voices powerful, but to cultivate at the outset a pure and pleasing tone. They will thus be adopting the very best means of preserving their voices for future use.

A second point to impress upon children is that they should *always sing easily*.

This is a matter of great importance, because it concerns especially the boys and girls who *try*. Strange to say, the very children who are most anxious to please are the most liable to go wrong. Wishing to do their utmost to earn approval from teacher or parents, they put themselves into stiff and uncomfortable attitudes that quite prevent them from using their voices to advantage. Many boys and girls who can speak and recite quite well, directly they are asked to sing straighten themselves up and put on the most solemn and unnatural expressions imaginable. Some will look as fierce as savages, others as careworn and worried as if all the troubles of the world rested on their young shoulders. This is not at all as it should be, and for once, at least, it is the apparently careless boys and girls who set the best example to the class. The child who would sing well must learn on no account to stiffen his throat, chin, neck, chest, or any part of the body. Many professors of singing find it a good plan to have in the classroom a long mirror and to get their pupils to sing in front of it. When children see for themselves how comical and absurd are these constrained attitudes and rigid expressions they soon abandon them. This matter of posture will be dealt with more fully at a later stage. I refer to it now only because it is so closely connected with a third important point, that children must learn to *sing with loose, open throat.*

Importance of easy singing.

To enable them to understand what this means, it will be well to direct their attention to the hard lump, or ball, in front of the throat, which many people call "Adam's apple." In children it is very small — some can scarcely feel it at all — but in adults it is fairly large. Explain that this lump is the larynx, or "voice-box," and that stretched across it within are the two thick strips of fleshy membrane known as the "vocal cords," though they more nearly resemble lips than cords.

Our voices are produced by the vibrations or flutterings of the edges of these "cords" as air is expelled between them from the lungs. The action is similar to that of the tongue of a musical reed instrument when it is made to vibrate by the movement of compressed air. If the larynx be fixed, as is the case when children shout or stiffen their necks in singing, it is impossible for the vocal apparatus to act freely and naturally. That is one reason why it is so important when singing that we should stand quite easily, without the slightest stiffening or straining of any part of the body. The tiny, weak muscles connected with the larynx are ill-fitted to bear undue strain, and the sure penalty of improper use of the organ of voice is the production of a non-resonant, unblending tone that is as different as possible from real music. The children should be asked whether they have ever noticed that as they sing the voice-box has a slight movement up and down. Let them put a forefinger and thumb on the lump, pressing very slightly, and then sing the upper F as if placing the voice against the top of the head. The larynx will then slip out of the child's hold and rise in the throat. Now direct them to sing the lower F, an octave below, trying to place the tone against the back of the neck. They will notice this time that the larynx has a downward movement. To produce pure quality

Movements of the larynx.

of tone we must do all in our power to assist this natural up and down movement of the larynx, and carefully avoid any action or attitude that will interfere with it. This is what is meant by singing with "loose, open throat."

Let us now return to the question of posture for singing.

Not only children but many grown-up people experience great difficulty in assuming an easy and becoming posture in singing.

Posture for singing.

At first it will be helpful to direct the class to "stand at ease," with hands lightly placed on the hips. Better still, perhaps, they can be told to *sit*, with hands held loosely behind. It cannot be too often emphasised that there must not be the slightest stiffening, but every muscle of the body should be loose and easy. When, after a short time, they have grown accustomed to the idea of *easy* singing, it is not at all difficult to acquire the really correct posture. This is to stand firmly, but comfortably, with toes out so that the feet are nearly at right angles. The shoulders should be slightly drawn back, to allow full expansion of the chest. The book, or copy, of music from which the child is singing should be held about eighteen inches from the chin and six inches from the chest, the arms being almost at right angles to the body. Neither the face nor any part of the body should be hidden, but the copy should be so held that both words and music can easily be read, the teacher or choir-master seeing only the edge. In singing the upper notes it will assist in placing the voice correctly if the head be slightly inclined and the chin drawn in. It is a great mistake to raise the chin in singing, as thereby the front of the throat is tightened and the larynx pressed. It is important, too, to guard against the slightest stiffening of the body, especially above the hips, as this will inevitably hamper the breathing powers and affect the resonance of the tone. The

POSTURE FOR SINGING.

illustration here given will perhaps be more helpful than any description, but only by practice before a mirror will a child be able to assume this posture easily and naturally.

While practising before the mirror the young vocalist should try not only to assume a good posture but to cultivate a pleasing facial expression. Instead of the weird and agonised expressions some boys and girls assume directly they attempt to sing, they should try to look pleased and to make their faces as well as their voices appeal to their hearers. The mouth should be opened easily, about wide enough for the thumb to be inserted sideways. The upper teeth should be shewn, and if possible the edge of the lower teeth. The corners of the mouth ought to be very slightly drawn in, as in the act of smiling. No matter how much attention is given to this question, the time is well spent, for to acquire a pleasing facial expression in youth is to gain a passport that will take one almost anywhere. Few people can resist the appeal of a bright, pleasant voice and a bright, pleasant face, and it is wonderful how much the one helps the other.

Facial expression.

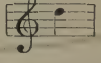
Practice before a mirror.

One other matter requires mention here. The tongue has been described on excellent authority as "an unruly evil," and it certainly often proves so to young singers. Indeed, one of the commonest faults of children is so to raise the tongue that it obstructs the free emission of tone and the sound is either forced through the nose, giving bad, nasal quality, or is rendered "woolly" and muffled, owing to the passage of the vibrating air from the larynx to the bony, resonating hard palate being intercepted by the fleshy, non-resonating tongue, and also to the fact that the cavity formed by the mouth (which is the principal agent amplifying the volume of tone) is lessened in

The tongue.

capacity and effectiveness by being partly blocked by the raised tongue. Children should be taught when singing to let the tongue lie perfectly flat in the mouth, the tip just touching the lower teeth. This is a matter of far greater importance than the majority of teachers realise. When puzzled to account for faulty tone-production, I would say, "Look at the tongue." In quite a large number of cases it will be found to be the cause of the trouble. If a pupil or chorister finds difficulty in keeping the tongue quite flat in singing let him take a small hand-mirror and sit with his back to the window or to the gas in such a way that the light is reflected into the mouth. Then get him to practise scales and exercises to all the vowel sounds, especially *ah* and *ô*, *o* and *aw* (see page 24), taking care that by means of the reflected light the open throat can be clearly seen. If the tongue be raised, it will be impossible to see down the throat, and the tone emitted cannot be other than bad, owing to the obstruction and the consequent loss of resonance.

The difference between speaking and singing.

Much that has so far been said applies equally to singing and to speaking. But there is a great deal of difference between the two forms of voice, or at least there should be. This difference is mainly due to the fact that in speaking the voice is pushed forward, while in singing, if the tone be rightly produced, it seems to be *pulled up*. This the children can easily test for themselves. Direct them to say rather loudly such a sentence as "I should like to sing D^1 nicely," and they will notice that in speaking the tone is pushed forward. Now let them sing D^1  by pulling the tone against the palate as shown in the diagram on p. 15. The effect of thus "lifting" the voice against the palate is that we assist that up and down movement of the larynx already re-

ferred to, and also — a matter of equal importance — secure the aid of the "sounding-board" with which Nature has provided us. By itself, the sound produced by the vibration of the vocal cords is poor and weak, but the mouth and the nasal cavities intensify and increase the sound and also confer that peculiar quality, or "timbre," which is so pleasant to listeners.

Only when the tone is allowed a perfectly free passage from the throat, and when it is reinforced and beautified by the resonating agencies of the nose and mouth and by being reflected from the hard palate, can it be really satisfactory. The shape and bony formation of the hard palate render it, together with the air space immediately above, a perfect instrument for the work it has to perform as a sounding board. It cannot be too clearly understood that the "lifting" or pulling process in singing is a means adopted to loosen and open the throat, to assist the up and down movement of the larynx, and to secure that musical quality which resonance and reflection from the hard palate can alone confer. The tone produced by this "lifting" process is called

The hard palate.

HEAD VOICE,

or by some "Placed Voice."

It is the refined tone generally produced by cathedral choirboys and is the secret of their beautifully effective voices. "Head Voice" has so many advantages that all young singers should cultivate it. Among these advantages may be included the following: —

(1) The tone so produced is pure, melodious, resonant, refined and blending.

(2) "Head voice" can be produced only by easy, effortless singing, and there is consequently no strain upon the muscles of the larynx.

(3) School children and choir boys who use head voice always sing well in tune, and they can sing for quite a long time without tiring their voices.

(4) Head voice not only beautifies but preserves the voice.

Opposed to "Head Voice" is the bad style of tone production known as Chest Voice or "Forced Voice," which unfortunately is used by large numbers of school children and choir boys. When children in singing stiffen the throat, and thus fix the larynx instead of allowing it to move freely, the tone is forced, instead of being "placed." They are using what is really a combination of the "speaking" and "shouting" voices instead of the singing voice. In "shouting," the throat is tightly compressed and the tone forced. In speaking also, as we have seen, the tone is pressed forward. "Chest voice" is a mixture of the two. Children who use it deprive themselves of the aid of their quality-making resonators, or "sounding-boards," and force forward a hard, non-resonant tone as distasteful to listeners as it is harmful to themselves. When the throat is stiffened and the larynx fixed, undue effort must be used in order to produce the tone, and there is consequently a great and very injurious strain on the delicate muscles of the throat. "Chest voice," besides being so harmful to young singers, is very penetrating, and will never blend with other voices. It has a penetrating force very similar to that of a child's "crying" voice, which it somewhat resembles in mode of production. Such wrongly produced tone can no more be got to blend with other voices than harsh cornets can be made to blend with a band of violins, violas, and 'cellos. And it is quite impossible for a child who uses it to sing expressively; such tone has no more power of expression than a mechanical instrument.

The evils of "chest voice."

By means of the accompanying diagrams and exercises it will be found comparatively easy to teach children so to place their tone that they use "head voice," and head voice only, and entirely avoid the harmful, raucous "chest voice." But before using these it will be necessary to insist yet again on *the importance of soft singing in class*, or the children will, quite unconsciously, get into the way of using bad forced tone in practising the very exercises designed to avoid it. It is not so much the exercises themselves that will benefit their voices as the easy, effortless way in which they learn to sing them. All vocal exercises for children should at first be sung very softly, especially in class or choir.

Firstly; Because when singing softly there is no risk of straining or injuring the voice.

Secondly; Because when singing softly the greater number of children also sing correctly, placing their voices properly, especially on the high notes, even when they have not been taught to sing.

How to Cultivate Head Voice.

It will help the class very much in learning to use head voice if it is impressed upon them that when singing they should feel the sensation of *lifting* the high notes against the palates in the roof of the mouth. Of course, they are not really doing anything of the kind; it is a sensation only, the sound having to be reflected from the hard palate and to issue from the mouth precisely as it does in speaking. What they actually do is to place the voice so that the throat is open, the larynx allowed free action, and the tone given the full benefit of the "resonance aid" afforded by the mouth and the nasal cavities.

"Lifting" the voice.

The class should first practise to the vowel sound *ô*, as in "on," the descending scale of F, trying to place each tone as nearly as possible in the position shown in the following diagram:

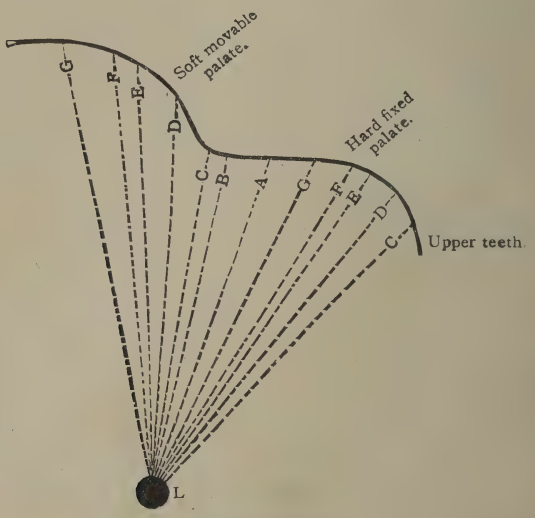


DIAGRAM A.

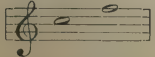
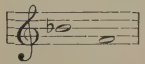
The curves at the top represent roughly the upper part of the mouth, that to the right being the hard palate, which does not move, that to the left the soft movable palate at the back of the mouth. The black dot *L* at the bottom indicates the larynx, or voice-box; the dotted lines represent the notes of the scale of C being lifted up to the palates.

Let the children practise this scale to the vowel *ô* until they grow quite accustomed to the sensation of gently *lifting* the notes. The immediate result will be that they will find these upper notes quite surprisingly easy to sing, involving no more effort than ordinary speaking. They will also produce them with a refined, fluty, mellow tone. The result, in fact, will be

altogether different from the hard tone produced by the forced "chest voice," in using which the singer finds that the higher the note the more difficult it is to produce. Once young vocalists have experienced the ease and delight of using "head voice" they will certainly never want to go back to the other.

This scale of F should be practised, *always softly*, for some time, each note at first to one beat, then increasing to two, three, and afterwards four beats. In practising to four beats it will be an advantage to "swell" slightly (see p. 18) on the notes, beginning each note *pp*, increasing the tone to *mp*, and then decreasing to *pp*. On no account must this exercise be sung thoughtlessly. The children must be made to remember all the time what they are doing, and should feel the sensation of *lifting* each note up to the palates.

London children, who have a special weakness for using throat-closing and tone-cramping vowels, should be directed to practise this exercise for several weeks. After a while the vowel *ah*, as in "father," should be used instead of *ó*, but always softly, the greatest care being taken that the throat is not stiffened and the tone forced forward. Then all the exercises given for this purpose at end of book should be practised in the same way.

The children will now find, if the exercises have been carried out as suggested, that their voices, however unmelodious before, have become musical and pleasant. They will be especially beautiful and resonant on the upper notes C^1 to F^1,  apparently lifted against the soft palate, but not so full and rich on the notes B♭ to F. 

With the many subjects pressing for attention, it is not

found possible in numbers of schools to devote a great deal of time to voice-production, and to such schools I would especially recommend this easily taught system. It is used by many choirs and schools, and is a sure way of securing easy, effortless singing, perfectly in tune, and blending with good contralto, alto, tenor, and bass voices.

A safe and easy way of securing correct voice-production.

Although this method produces such excellent results, there is, however, an even better system which I will now proceed to describe. Teachers who have used what we will call system number one are well aware that it has a disadvantage, and that an important one. While the notes so produced are beautiful in quality — infinitely superior to any that can be obtained by "chest voice" — it must be admitted that the lower notes are not so full and rich as the upper.

An even better system, but one requiring care.

The second diagram (p. 15) is designed to illustrate a method of securing pure, even quality of tone throughout the compass of the voice, C to G^1. It is necessary to say, however, that the method is attended by some little danger and requires careful and attentive study. Any child can use the system illustrated by diagram A without risk of using bad tone or injuring the voice; but the second method should at first be practised only with a teacher, and should certainly not be attempted until the first has been thoroughly mastered, as in practising there is a tendency to force the tone and cause the lower notes to be sharp.

When the diagram has been attentively studied, the children should be directed to sing the upper F^1, lifting the tone to the position on the soft palate shown in both diagrams A and B. Then let them sing the lower F, an octave below, as if *pulling* the tone against the upper part of the back of the neck. (The

"pulling" is, of course, a sensation only, as was explained as regards "lifting" in diagram A, the tone having to be reflected from the hard palate.) In singing the upper F as suggested, children unconsciously raise the larynx and open the throat, a pure, easy, resonant tone resulting. When they sing the lower

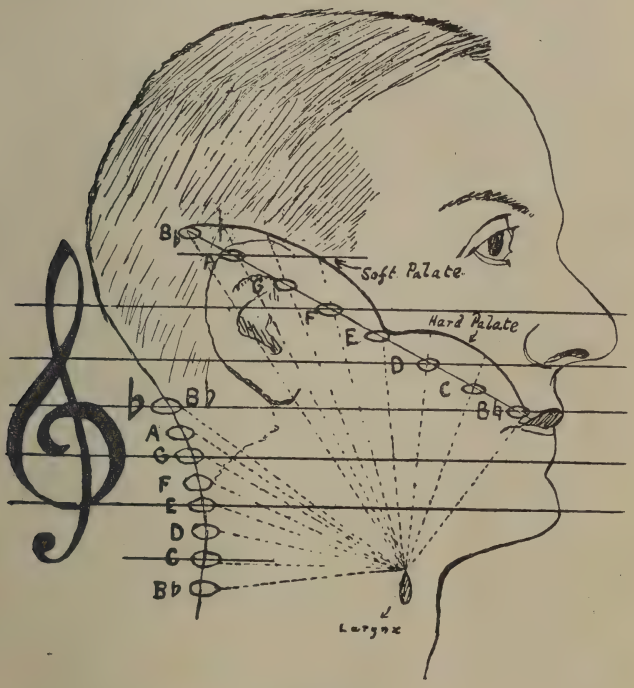
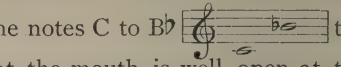


DIAGRAM B.

F, and apparently pull it against the lower part of the back of the head, as shown in diagram B, they *open the mouth well at the back*, lower the larynx, and neutralise and release that forward pressure upon the throat in singing the lower notes that users of "chest voice" are obliged to apply. They also adopt the best means of opening the throat more fully for the

lower than for the upper notes and of securing the resonant aids of the mouth and post-nasal cavities and also reflection from the hard palate. In singing the notes C to B♭  the utmost care must be taken that the mouth is well open at the back. The tongue must not be raised, but, as already explained, should lie quite flat, with the edge just touching the lower teeth. If these notes are correctly produced, the throat will be loose and well open, and there will be a good open space at the back of the mouth, the tongue being down and the soft palate well up, resulting in a round, mellow quality of tone that gives the sensation of the whole mouth being full of beautiful sound.

Change of register.

The children will very likely ask why, in this second voice-placing diagram, the note B♮ is placed up on the hard palate and B♭ against the back of the head. It may be explained that this is owing to a peculiar change of production that takes place at about this pitch, called by some instructors "a change of register." But as this book is mainly intended to render easy of comprehension the principles underlying correct voice-production, I have not thought it necessary to deal with the question of registers, which so many students find difficulty in understanding.

When the pupils have mastered the second method of placing the voice, they should practise also the descending and ascending scales of C, D♭, D, E♭, E, F, F♯, and G, the notes above B♭ to the ô (on) vowel and B♭ and the notes below to the o (oak) vowel, taking great care, first, to sing easily; second, to sing with loose, open throat; and third, to place each note up or back, as shown in the diagrams, according to its position on the treble stave. But they must on no account compress the throat or over-exert themselves, or sharp singing will result.

Encourage them to strive always for pure quality of tone, no matter how weak at first, and with time and careful, consistent practice the quantity will follow. One great advantage they will derive at once from thus learning to place their voices correctly: they will gain the power of expressing with the voice the feeling and meaning of the words they sing. They will also find that by using "head voice" they produce a beautiful blending quality, sing well in tune, and their voices do not tire. The advantages of this system of singing may be summarised as follows:

1. The back of the mouth and the throat are well opened.

2. The "up-and-down" movement of the larynx in the throat is allowed full scope.

3. The pressure on the larynx to which children are so prone is neutralised, the attempt to "pull back" counteracting the general tendency to force and exert undue pressure on the larynx and front of the throat.

4. The voice is so produced as to secure the full benefit of the resonating agencies of the mouth and post-nasal spaces, to which agencies are mainly due the peculiar quality, or *timbre*, to which the singing voice owes its attractiveness.

5. The tone is assisted on to the hard palate, which may be described as the "sounding-board" and "reflector" of the voice.

Singing Scales Downward.

It will have been noticed that in all the exercises and examples so far given it has been suggested that the scales should be practised *downward* instead of upward as is still customary in many classes. This is because it has been found that children experience great difficulty in beginning on a high note unless they pull up the tone, and so, knowingly or unknowingly, use the "head voice."

Reason for practising scales downward.

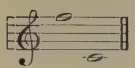
They are then almost certain to sing the upper notes correctly, and the lower ones will probably follow. On the other hand, a bad start, with forced tone, at the bottom of the scale, only gets worse with each succeeding note.

Until a young singer is quite sure of his or her power of placing the voice correctly, it is a safe rule to start at the *top* of the scale and sing downward.

Teachers are sometimes puzzled to know whether notes are being correctly produced. As was said on page 11, when the singing is soft it is almost sure to be at the same time correct, but when expression requires the tone to be somewhat louder trouble begins.

Swelling on notes to test correctness of production.

As it happens, there is a simple test that enables us to verify the correctness of tone as surely as we can demonstrate a mathematical problem. This test is known as "swelling" on notes, and teachers will find it very helpful. Direct the child to sing the notes of the scale of F very gently, "pulling" the tone as recommended in the diagram on page 12. First, let him take the D^1 and pull it gently against the middle of the hard palate. The result should be a soft, pure head note. Increase the pull — pull harder, as it were — and the tone will gradually increase in loudness, or, as it is expressed in music, we shall get a , or crescendo. Now lessen the pull, gradually decreasing the quantity of tone, thus , or diminuendo. The crescendo and diminuendo together form the "swell" on the note, thus . Let him then sing again the note D to a semibreve, increasing the tone in the middle of the note to moderately loud, and reducing it at the end to soft. This should be practised to all the notes from F to the lower



C, and if a louder, fuller tone is obtained in the middle of each note without altering the quality, the instructor

may be sure that the note is correctly produced. Many children will crescendo to a forced "chest note" — a sure sign that the note is wrongly produced. They should bear in mind throughout this exercise that singing is a *pulling*, not a pushing process.

There is another test of correct tone-production, and a very important one. Indeed, it is much more than a test — it is almost a final judgment. It will be found that if *forced tone is used the child cannot sing expressively.* A boy or girl who forces the tone, instead of placing it up and back in the manner indicated by the diagrams, has no sympathy or feeling in the voice at all, and one might just as well listen to a mechanical instrument. Once the not very difficult art of placing the voice correctly has been mastered, the child will find that he has enormously increased his power of expression, and his singing will consequently give tenfold pleasure to his listeners and to himself.

"Chest" voice non-expressive.

The Compass of the Voice.

It is of the greatest importance that children should not strain their voices to poor, thin quality by shrieking notes which are too high for them, and that they should not acquire a coarse, rough tone by attempting notes which are too low. The average compass of the mezzo-soprano and the baritone voices is that best suited to children, and it is the notes in this compass only that they should cultivate, namely from C to G^1.

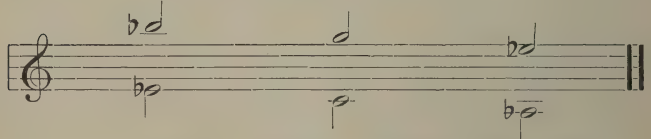
Compass of children's and adults' voices.

When children grow up they will have one of three kinds of voice; as a woman, soprano, mezzo-soprano, or contralto; as a man, tenor, baritone, or bass. A soprano voice is similar in production to a tenor; a mezzo-soprano to a baritone, and a contralto to a bass. It is only reasonable that as children they should be

helped to cultivate that range of voice (say about a twelfth) which they will most use when they grow up. The average compass of the different voices is shown below, the tenor, baritone, and bass being eight notes, or an octave, below soprano, mezzo-soprano, and contralto:

Soprano Compass. Mezzo-Soprano Compass; or, Contralto Compass.

CHILD'S COMPASS.



Tenor Compass 8ve below | Baritone Compass 8ve below | Bass Compass 8ve below

Part Singing.

Intimately connected with this matter of the compass of the voice is the somewhat debatable question of the value of part singing for children. A point that needs to be borne in mind by teachers is that adults who have not as children been accustomed to take any part other than the top in concerted music almost invariably find difficulty in singing a contralto, tenor, or bass part. The consequence is that they prefer to take the soprano line, or "air," but of course, as men, an octave below. On the other hand, adults who were accustomed as children to take second and third parts in school or choir can always in later life do justice to an under part. It is therefore a distinct disadvantage to children to limit their experience to the "air." But it is equally important not to make a mistake in the other direction, as in a second or third part there is rarely any melody for a child to take home. When a child is happy he naturally sings, and holding, as every teacher of experience

must, that the snatches of songs and hymns he thus amuses himself with at home play a very important part in his musical development, it seems to me that the constant taking of second and third parts is the reverse of helpful. Indeed, it will rarely be found that a child who is always given unmelodious under parts at school sings at all for his own pleasure out of school. Generally speaking, teachers and choirmasters will find it best to teach their pupils to sing only in two parts, and occasionally to interchange, making those who have sung the upper take the lower, and the lower the upper. Three- and four-part songs should be quite exceptional. As a rule, the lowest part is quite unmelodious, and frequently the pitch is below the child's compass, resulting inevitably in rough and unmusical tone quality. When special reasons render it desirable to take three- and four-part songs, the teacher should carefully guard against the use of the hard "chest voice," as with it a pure *ensemble* is impossible, and the quality of the voice is permanently affected.

Before passing from the subject of the use and preservation of the voice, it may be well to add a note concerning

Catching Cold.

Colds are a nuisance to everyone, but they are especially troublesome to singers. Boys and girls should be taught to be most careful, especially immediately after singing. The exertion of singing, as is the case when work of any kind is done, produces heat; and when the larynx and the throat are thus heated, children are more liable than at any other time to catch cold in the throat. Choir boys are great sufferers in this respect. When, after a service or an evening practice, they pass out into the cold air with heated

Nasal breathing.

throats they should be most careful to breathe through the *nostrils*. Indeed, this rule applies to all who use the voice, for, as we shall see in Chapter III, dealing with correct breathing, the air in passing through the nostrils is warmed and the risk of catching cold is thus greatly lessened. Experienced singers on leaving a concert room are always most careful to close the lips and to breathe through the nostrils. Many even make a rule not to speak for some minutes, until the heated vocal apparatus has had time to cool. Only by adopting these precautions are they able to keep free from colds in the throat and thus maintain their voices in first-class condition.

Another very frequent cause of sore throats is the wearing of scarves or boas. Boys and girls who wear these so-called "throat-protectors" run twice as much risk as their unprotected companions. By fully exposing the throat at all times to the air it is hardened and strengthened, and children render themselves far less liable to colds.

Never use "protectors."

CHAPTER II.

On Vowels and Consonants and their Treatment in Singing.

Children will have learnt from their grammars that the vowels in the English language are five (a, e, i, o, and u), and that every syllable must contain at least one of them. It should be explained that in reality, however, there are more than five vowel sounds, because some, such as *a*, are pronounced in several ways (as in far, fate, fat, etc.). Now, it unfortunately happens that several of the vowels that are most often used are very bad for singing purposes, and if sung as most people speak them would be non-resonant and "tone-cramping." This is the more unfortunate because vocal tone is, of course, produced entirely on the vowels, and the consonants do more to hinder than to help. To secure pure resonant tone, therefore, it is necessary to make the fullest possible use of the vowels that are good for our purpose, or, as musicians sometimes say, the "round" vowels, and to avoid, as far as we can, using the bad ones. People constantly remark how much superior the tone-production of people who live in Yorkshire and other Northern and Midland counties is to that of Londoners. This is largely because some of the vowels they use are so much better vocally than those used by people who live in the South. To put the matter in a nutshell, the superiority is not so much one of voice as of vocalisation. It is quite impossible to get good vocal effect with such vowels as London

The vowels of our grammars are not the singing vowels.

Northern and London pronunciation.

children employ in words like "make," "but," "now," and "my," and if the tone-production of the South is ever to equal that of the North, it can only be by the use of the best voice-placing vowels and the careful avoidance of those that cramp and mar the tone. Moreover, there can be but little doubt that the great interest taken by Northern people in choral music is largely due to the increased pleasure derived both by executants and listeners from superior vocalisation.

The Seven Good Singing Vowels.

The good tone-producing, resonant vowels are the following:

No. 1.	**AH**,	As in F*a*ther.
" 2.	**Ê**,	As in *E*gg.
" 3.	**Î**,	As in P*i*n.
" 4.	**OO**,	As in Tooth.
" 5.	**O**,	As in *O*ak.
" 6.	**AW**,	As in Gn*aw*.
" 7.	**Ô**,	As in *O*n.

These the class should learn thoroughly and be accustomed to use on every possible occasion.

It will be well, before proceeding further, to make the children clearly understand that the *ô*, *ê*, and *î* named above as good singing vowels are not the ordinary *o*, *e*, and *i* included among the five speaking vowels of the English alphabet. Indeed, of these five, as given in the grammars, only the *o* is a good vowel for singing purposes. It should be carefully noted that

Important distinctions in vowel sounds.

No. 2 is not the *e* of me, but *ê* as in egg.
No. 3 is not the *i* of night, but *î* as in pin.
No. 7 is not the *o* of oak, but *ô* as in on.

But thinking boys and girls will at once ask, "What of the hundreds of words which contain other vowels than the seven named in the table?"

This brings us to a very interesting part of the subject. As a matter of fact, it is possible to sing nearly all words (say at least ninety per cent) on the seven good vowels and combinations of them, and there is really no need at all to use the bad, tone-cramping vowel sounds.

Nearly all words can be sung on the good tone-producing vowels.

Five Good Diphthongs.

Five non-resonant vowels which require special treatment are *i* as in "night," *u* as in "music," *ow* as in "now," *oi* as in "joy," and *a* as in "save." These all tend to pull down and cramp the tone in the throat, but here again our seven good vowels, or rather combinations of them, can easily be substituted. Let the list of good singing vowels, numbered one to seven, on page 24, be continued as follows:

8. **i,** as in "night," should be sung as ah–î (vowels 1 and 3 in former list), gliding together.
9. **u,** as in "music," should be sung as î–oo (vowels 3 and 4), gliding together.
10. **ow,** as in "now," should be sung as ah–oo (vowels 1 and 4), gliding together.
11. **oy,** as in "joy," should be sung as aw–î (vowels 6 and 3), gliding together.
12. **a,** as in "save" and "make," should be sung as êî (vowels 2 and 3), gliding together.

It would be of interest to the children, and at the same time impress upon them the importance of substituting good vowels for bad ones, to get them to sing some familiar piece to the best vowels and diphthongs only. They will then realise, too, how exceptional it is to come across a word that cannot be fitted to one or more of the seven vowels and five combinations.

...er illustration could hardly be chosen for the purpose ...he first verse of "God save the King." Let them sing as follows, taking care that the tongue lies quite flat in the mouth:

	God	save	our	gracious	King,
	ô	êî	ahoo	êî–û	î
Vowel number	7	12	10	2–3–13	3
	Long	live	our	noble	King,
	ô	î	ahoo	o–oo	î
Vowel number	7	3	10	5–4	3
	God	save	the	King.	
	ô	êî	ē	î	
Vowel number	7	12	14	3	
	Send	him	victorious,		
	ê	î	î–ô–î–û		
Vowel number	2	3	3–7–3–13		
	Happy		and	glorious,	
	â or ah–î		â or ah	ô–î–û	
Vowel number	15 or 1–3		15 or 1	7–3–13	
	Long	to	reign	over	us,
	ô	oo	ê	o–ē	û
Vowel number	7	4	2	5–14	13
	God	save	the	King.	
	ô	êî	ē	î	
Vowel number	7	12	14	3	

[The numbers below the vowels are for reference. See list of vowel sounds below. For explanation of vowels numbered 13, 14, and 15, see p. 28.]

Classes for the first time confronted with such a rendering of familiar words will probably be puzzled, but it will be found in practice that they soon grasp the idea and readily learn to substitute the good singing vowels for the tone-cramping ones. But before any progress can be made, the seven vowels and the five diphthongs must be thoroughly mastered and the children taught to rely almost entirely upon them. Difficulties will of course occur, especially with junior classes, and even the teacher will occasionally have to think twice before deciding which vowels are best suited to particular words. Experience will show, however, that the statement made on page 25 is not the least exaggerated, and that quite ninety per cent of the vowel sounds of the English language can be accurately rendered by the seven good tone-producing vowels and the five suggested diphthongs.

The benefits to be derived from this system of substitution are so great, and so immediately apparent, that every teacher who gives it a fair trial will, I am convinced, be encouraged to persevere.

List of Vocalising Vowels.

1. ah as in "father."
2. ê " " "egg."
3. î " " "pin."
4. oo " " "tooth."
5. o " " "oak."
6. aw " " "gnaw."
7. ô " " "on."
8. i " " "night" sung as ahî (1 and 3 gliding together).
9. u " " "music" " " îoo (3 and 4 " ").
10. ow " " "now" " " ahoo (1 and 4 " ").
11. oy " " "joy" " " awî (6 and 3 " ").
12. a " " "save" " " êî (2 and 3 " ").

List of Vocalising Vowels — *continued.*

13. û as in "much" sung as a modification of ô (No. 7).
14. ē " " "earth" " " " " " ah (No. 1).
15. â " " "bat" " " " " " ê (No. 2).

There still remains the question of the erring ten per cent, and these will be found on examination to consist of words containing *û*, as in "much," *ē* as in "earth," "the" (before a consonant), and *â* as used in "bat's back" (Arne's "Where the bee sucks"). If only good vowels or diphthongs could be substituted for these, without interfering with the pronunciation, we should have a complete remedy for the throaty tone so general in some parts of the country. This, unfortunately, is not possible, but much may still be done to minimize the trouble.

For the sake of easy reference let us number these three vowels in the same way as the others. We have already had 1 to 7 good vowels, and 8 to 12 diphthongs. We now have —

(13) *û* as in "much." Substitute a modification of *ô* (vowel No. 7)
(14) *ē* as in "earth," and "the" (before a consonant) " " "*ah* (vowel No. 1)
(15) *â* as in "bat's back" " " "*é* (vowel No. 2)

People in the North, as a rule, both in speaking and singing, substitute the round *oo* vowel for the *û* of "much." As the word is pronounced in London and the South, it is quite impossible to produce singable tone, yet the full adoption of the Northern *oo* is hardly likely to be received with favor. The best way is to use a modification of the *ô* vowel (No. 7), as in some of the Eastern counties, which for fulness of tone is even superior to the North of England *oo*. "Much" will thus become "môch," assisting to place the voice on the "sounding-board" and greatly improving the tone without marring the pronunciation.

No. 14, *ē* as in "early" and "earth," and as in "the" before

a word beginning with a consonant, is one of the most troublesome of the bad vowels, first because it is of such frequent occurrence (probably accounting for about half of our faulty ten per cent), and secondly because the use of an approximate substitute requires great discretion. The nearest approach to the sound that can be obtained without altering the pronunciation is a modified form of the *ah* vowel (No. 1). The *ê* must on no account be changed to the full *ah*, or the result will be absurd, as *ahth* (earth), *evah* (ever). There must be just a tinge — no more — of the *ah* vowel, sufficient to direct the tone from the throat to the hard palate, but not enough to alter the sound. The troublesome and frequent "the" before a consonant should be rendered in much the same way, as "God save *thah* King," but always taking care not to overdo the *ah*.

No. 15, *â* as in "bat's back," is perhaps the most difficult vowel of all to replace. Its impossibility as a singing vowel has long been universally recognised, and most teachers have been accustomed to substitute the pure "ah" vowel, rendering "hahpy" for "happy," "ahnd" for "and," etc. But while it is advisable to use the "ah" vowel as much as possible, there are many words, such as the "bat's back" of Arne, "at," and others, for which it cannot be considered a satisfactory substitute. A modified form of the *ê* vowel (No. 2) most nearly approaches the correct sound, but again there must be only a tinge (just sufficient to place the voice up on the "sounding-board" palate)," for "bet's beck" and "et" are quite inadmissible.

Such words as "hear," "near," "fear," etc., should be sung as "hîr," "nîr," "fîr." On no account should the children be allowed to sing them as two-syllable words — "he–ar," "ne–ar," "fe–ar," etc.

Consonants Used as Vowels.

W and Y used as vowels.

In singing, the consonants *w* and *y* are always treated as vowels. When beginning a word, *y* is sung as *î* (good vowel No. 3), as in "yet" (sung as *î–et*) and "you" (sung as *î–oo*).

When *y* occurs at some other part of a word than the beginning, as in "merry," it is sung as *î* (No. 3), and sometimes as *ah–î* (Nos. 1 and 3), as in "try" (trahî).

W is changed to *oo* (good vowel No. 4), such words as "will" being sung *oo–ill*, "wit" *oo–it* and "were" *oo–êre*.

How to treat wh, as in "when."

The sound of *wh* in words like "when," "where," "which," is sung to the *oo* vowel (No. 4), preceded by the aspirate "h", thus:

"when" is sung as *hooén*
"where" is " " *hooêr*
"which" is " " *hooîch*
"white" is " " *hooahît*

The Best Vowels for Practising Purposes.

But of the seven good voice-producing vowels, some are much better than others. This is especially true as regards their use for practising purposes. The best are *ah* (No. 1), *o* (No. 5), and *ô* (No. 7), followed in the order named, by *aw* (No. 6), and *oo* (No. 4).

The *ah* vowel.

For cultivating bright, beautiful tone no vowel approaches *ah*. There are dangers in its use, however, or rather in its misuse, which have led many teachers to prefer to it the much inferior *oo* and *aw* vowels. If only care be taken that the sound is rightly produced — and this is not really difficult — more benefit will accrue from practising on *ah* than would be possible by any other means. See

that the children do not in practising stiffen the throat and press the larynx, thus forcing forward the hard and strident "chest voice." By using the upward, or apparent "pulling back," method of tone-production recommended on page 14, there is no pressure whatever on the front of the throat or the larynx, and the tone produced is mellow and resonant. *Ah* has so many advantages that teachers cannot be too strongly recommended to keep to it. The *oo* vowel used instead by some trainers and choirmasters, though it certainly secures pure quality of tone, and is a useful corrective to children accustomed to produce the metallic and non-resonant "chest voice," tends in sustained practice to cramp the voice and to make the tone thin, poor, and "hooty." As a means to an end, *oo* is all very well, but *ah* is by far the better vowel for practice. Many scholars and choir boys seem to experience a little difficulty in getting the exact pronunciation, and are inclined to sing *aw* instead. This must be carefully guarded against, as it is most important that the *ah* should be absolutely correct. The best way is to practise with smiling mouth, as in the illustration on page 6, letting the upper teeth be well shown and also the upper edges of the lower teeth. So produced, *ah* will be of the richest and purest possible tone quality.

The *ah* and *O* vowels.

For opening the throat and the back of the mouth, *ah* (No. 1) is, for notes above B♭, a very serviceable vowel; *o* (No. 5) is best for B♭ and notes below. These vowels will be found especially useful for beginners, and children who have got into the way of pressing the throat and singing with hard, unblending tone should be directed to practise them constantly. In practising these vowels the mouth should be rounded and the lips placed well forward, away from the teeth.

It will now be excellent practice to sing on each of our seven good vowels separately, in the order named, *oo*, *oh*, *aw*, *ô*, *ah*, *ê*, and *î*, and also on combinations of them, the scales of D, E, and F, descending and ascending (see also exercises at end of book).

As the best vocal tone can only be produced on the singing vowels, the children must learn to make the fullest possible use of them. It is important, of course, to articulate clearly, and for this reason the consonants must not be overlooked, but *in voice-training the use of consonants should be avoided*, our object being to strengthen the vocal muscles and to make the voice full, resonant, bright, and beautiful. Even when, in practising, teachers think it advisable occasionally to use consonants to precede vowels, as in *koo*, *te*, etc., the consonant should be rendered as lightly as possible, as it will tend to cramp the tone and make it poor in quality.

When the sol–fa syllables are used on the movable doh method, or in the Tonic Sol–fa notation, the greatest care should be taken not to use the consonants too much. Doh, ray, me, fah, soh, la, te, doh, if articulated too heavily, especially on te, tend to force the tone and to make it non-resonant. To practise on the vowels, and the vowels only, is best for voice-cultivation.

It will be found very helpful to get the children now and again to sing familiar songs to the best tone-producing vowels and diphthongs only, omitting all the consonants. This will do more than anything else to make them realise how all-important are those vowels for producing beautiful tone. (See p. 26.)

Until the children have grown used to singing on the good vowels only, they will sometimes be puzzled to know which vowels are the best for a particular word, in order to secure the best

vocal tone and yet make themselves clearly understood. But with a little practice and assistance they will soon learn what to do.

To sum up all that has been said about the vowels, impress upon the class that:

(1) Pure vocal tone can only be produced on the singing vowels.

(2) The best tone-producing vowels are the seven named on page 24, and these should always be used in practising.

(3) With a little care and practice very nearly all words can be sung on the seven good vowels and the five diphthongs (see pp. 24 and 25), without in the least interfering with clear enunciation.

We can now pass on to

The Consonants.

However musical children's voices may be, and however excellent the tone acquired by carrying out the instructions already given and practising the exercises at the end of the book, half the pleasure of listening will be lost if auditors cannot make out what words are being sung.

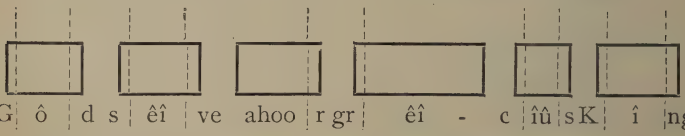
The use of consonants.

It should be explained that the consonants are like little shutters separating the vowels from each other and labelling them with a meaning. When *ô êî ahoo êî-î-û î* are sung, the effect may be excellent as a performance, but the flesh and blood of the vowels must have the bond of the skeleton, that is, the consonants, to convey the inspiration of "God save our gracious King." The consonants therefore must receive due attention, but it is utterly impossible to make musical tone out of b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, x, or z

Make the consonants as short and distinct as possible.

The only way to secure both full vocal effect and clear enunciation is to train the class to make the vowels as long as possible and the consonants short but distinct. The following diagrams will serve to illustrate what is meant. Take again "God save the King" and represent the vowels by little blocks, thus:

Now add the consonants. Of course the time occupied in singing must be exactly the same whether the vowels only are sung, or the vowels and consonants together. The consonants, therefore, will make the vowel blocks of tone so much the smaller, cutting off pieces from each end of most of them.



The children will readily understand from this that the more time they give to the consonants the less there is for the tone-producing vowels; and the more they give to the voice-making vowels the less remains for the troublesome and unmusical consonants. The golden rule to remember is

VOWELS LONG, CONSONANTS SHORT.

Initial and final consonants.

The initial consonant of a word or syllable should always be sounded instantly, so that the singer passes at once to the tone-producing vowel. Consonants in the middle of a word should be treated in the same way, hurrying on to the following vowel. But consonants at the end of words must, if the meaning is to be clear to

listeners, have just a little more time given to them and be sounded very distinctly.

To insure the best tone quality and distinct articulation it is necessary to:

(1) Articulate the first and intermediate consonants very quickly;
(2) Dwell on the vowels as long as possible
(3) Articulate the final consonants quickly but very distinctly.

Unless children are put on their guard, this last point (No. 3) will become more and more difficult the more they improve in singing. This is because it is always harder to articulate while singing one of the resonant vowels than before doing so. That is, it is easier to sound the first consonant than the last, although the last is so much the more important in conveying the word to listeners. As their voices become more full and beautiful by singing on the vowels, children will find the final consonants increasingly troublesome, and will need to give them constant care and attention if people are to understand what they are singing. One often hears it said of a singer who uses bad vocal tone that whatever his faults, his words can be understood, while those of much better singers cannot. This is certainly true in very many instances, but there is not the slightest reason why it should be so. With proper care, pupils can not only sing musically and with full vocal effect, but can also sing clearly and be well understood.

As the voice improves, the consonants require increasing attention.

When two or more consonants come together at the beginning of a word, as in "flesh," they should be sounded with a single quick movement of the tongue. So when two or more consonants come together at the end of a word. In fact, wherever two or more consonants

When two or more consonants come together.

occur together they should always be articulated as nearly like one as possible. While on this subject, it may be well to impress upon the children that they should be as careful in pronunciation when singing with others in class or choir as when singing alone. Many boys and girls when first asked to sing a solo experience great difficulty, simply because they have become accustomed to slur their words and to articulate carelessly when singing with others.

The consonants most frequently sung indistinctly.

The following are the consonants which I have most frequently noticed children sing indistinctly — :

g, as in "refuge." This should be sung like *ch*.

d as in "head." The "d" should be very short, almost like "t."

l, n, m, and **ng.** These resonant consonants should be articulated as follows:

l, as in "wall," should be sung with the tip of the tongue against the front of the palate, close to the upper teeth, followed by a slight continuance of the sound with the tongue in that position.

n should be sung with the front of the tongue against the palate, followed by a slight continuance of the tone through the nostrils.

m, as in "him," should be articulated by the pressing of the lips, followed by a slight continuance of the tone through the nostrils.

ng, as in "sing," should be sounded with a slight pressure of the back of the tongue against the soft palate, followed by a slight continuance of the tone through the nostrils.

These last four differ from all the other consonants in that there is just a little resonance when they are sung.

Care should be taken to articulate the initial and final conso-

nants separately and distinctly. Thoughtless and inattentive children have a provoking way of running them together, or "smudging." "Made to" will be sung as "may to," "woodland dells" as "woodlan dells," "all lands" as "aw lands," "was so" as "wô so," "with them" as "wi' them," "fiercest strife" as "fierces strife," "flesh shall" as "flê shall," and so on. Such slovenliness is highly objectionable and must on no account be allowed to develop into a habit.

CHAPTER III.

On Breathing.

Breathing comprises two distinct actions, namely, taking in breath, or inspiration, and letting out breath, or expiration. It is impossible for children to become good singers unless particular attention is paid to this matter, for, as the late Sir Morell Mackenzie wrote, "proper management of the breath is the foundation of good singing, and however beautiful a voice may be in itself it can never be used with artistic effect if the method of breathing is faulty."

Correct breathing the foundation of good singing.

It is necessary for singing purposes to practise:

Inspiration and expiration.

(1) Inspiration: taking in through the nose as much air as the lungs will hold;

(2) Expiration: letting out air in just sufficient quantities to secure the best vocal effects.

Many children make two mistakes in the act of inspiration: (1) They breathe through the mouth instead of through the nostrils; (2) they take short snatches, or gasps, of breath only instead of deep inspirations. In the act of expiration the usual fault is to let out too much breath. This is generally caused by raising and then lowering the shoulders, thus, as it were, pumping out the breath, and forcing far too much through the vocal apparatus.

Common faults in breathing.

It is of the utmost importance that children should learn to take in air through the nose, and through the nose only. This is the natural and the best way. When we breathe through

the nose the air is warmed and cleansed from impurities before reaching the lungs. "Mouth-breathers" frequently suffer from sore throat, bronchial colds, adenoids, and other ailments which rarely trouble children who have learned to breathe correctly both by day and night. Those who live in crowded towns should especially avoid the really dangerous habit of mouth-breathing. Correct breathing is important to all children, as aiding chest and lung development and promoting general health, but it is especially important to singers.

Importance of breathing through the nose only.

Children should practise the following exercises daily at home or at school. Even when walking along the road, it is a great advantage to have an occasional "air-bath" by taking in the fullest possible breaths through the nose.

Breathing Exercises.

General directions.

(1) "Standing position" means feet at an angle of 90 degrees, heels touching, knees almost touching, the weight of the body being equally distributed upon each leg, but falling mainly upon the heels; trunk erect, the chest being the most prominent part; head poised easily upon the shoulders so that the eyes look straight ahead; the forearms and hands lightly touching the sides.

(2) In each exercise the front wall of the chest should be brought well forward (but without stiffness), more especially when the lungs are fully distended with air. The abdomen should at the same time be slightly flattened, and the lower ribs should bulge out. Many children waste breath in singing at the ends of phrases by allowing the breast-bone to collapse. Impress upon them that they should keep the breast-bone well up in breathing exercises and also in singing. See diagrams Ab and Ac, pp. 47 and 48.

(3) The inspirations should be perfectly silent, usually slow,

and mostly through the nose. At first, to insure this, it will be well to close the lips.

STANDING POSITION.

(4) Repeat each exercise six times.

(5) The shoulders must not be raised.

Exercise I.

Standing position as in Direction No. 1. Place one hand on each side of the lower part of the chest, with the fingers and thumbs pointing forwards.

(*a.*) Inhale slowly through the nose, at the same time flattening the abdomen. A distention of the lower ribs will be distinctly felt if the hands have been placed as directed. Care should be taken that there is no distention *forward* of the abdomen. If

EXERCISE I

the exercise is correctly practised and there is bulging of the lower ribs, the shoulders cannot be raised, and the object of the exercise is attained.

(*b.*) Exhale by monotoning numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (Met. 80.)

Exercise II.

Standing position as in Direction No. 1, but with hands lightly clasped behind and finger tips interlocked so that no strain is felt.

EXERCISE II.

(*a.*) Take a deep breath through the nostrils, throwing the chest well forward and flattening the abdomen. The sensation should be as if the breath is directed from the nose towards the hands at the back, so that the lungs become fully inflated at the back as well as at the sides.

(*b.*) Exhale by monotoning numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. (Met. 80.)

Exercise III.

Standing position as in Direction No. 1.

(*a.*) Raise arms and place the tips of the fingers just above the back of the neck, keeping the elbows forward. Press the elbows slowly back towards each other, until they are in the same straight line, at the same time taking a full breath through the nose.

(*b.*) Bring elbows forward to original position, at the same time monotoning numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. (Met. 80.)

Exercise IV.

Standing position as in Direction No. 1.

(*a.*) Inhale while slowly raising hands level with the shoulders, palms downwards.

(*b.*) Exhale while lowering arms and hands to original position by monotoning 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. (Met. 80).

Exercise V.

Standing position as in Direction No. 1, but hands level with shoulders, palms upwards.

(*a.*) Slowly raise the hands and arms until they are perpendicular at the sides of the head, at the same time inhaling through the nose.

(*b.*) Slowly lower the hands until level with the shoulders, at the same time monotoning 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. (Met. 80.)

(*c.*) Drop hands briskly to sides.

Exercise VI.

Standing position as in Direction No. 1.

(*a.*) Inhale slowly while drawing the arms back until the hands are from twelve to fifteen inches behind the body, and at the same time gradually raise the heels, flatten the abdomen, and bring forward the chest.

(*b.*) Return to original position and exhale by monotoning numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. (Met. 80.)

The designs illustrating the breathing exercises are by Miss Katheleen Lucas.

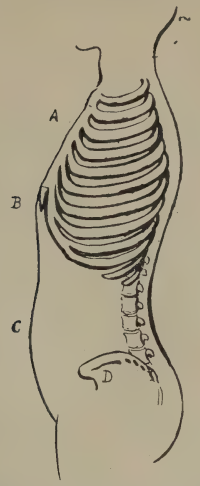


DIAGRAM A. A. — SIDE VIEW OF THE CHEST AT THE END OF EXPIRATION (LUNGS EMPTY).

A. The breast-bone and front of the chest-wall are nearly vertical.
B. The ribs are sloping downwards and forwards (this is most marked in the lower ribs).
C. The front of the belly-wall is bulging forwards.
D. The hip-bone is nearer the lower edge of the chest-wall.

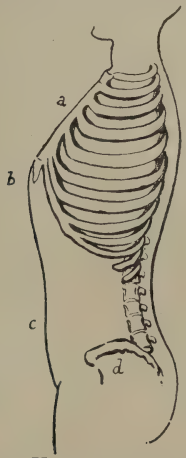


DIAGRAM A. B. — SIDE VIEW OF THE CHEST AT THE END OF INSPIRATION (LUNGS FULL).

a. The breast-bone and the front of the chest-wall are more sloping.
b. The ribs are more horizontal (especially the lower ones).
c. The front of the belly-wall is flattened.
d. The distance between the lower edge of the chest-wall and the hip-bone is increased.

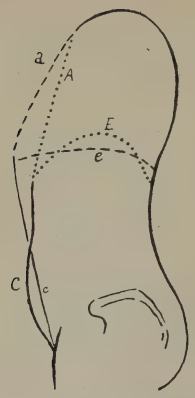


DIAGRAM A. C. — DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW THE POSITION OF THE FRONT OF THE CHEST-WALL VARIES DURING EXPIRATION AND INSPIRATION. (CONTRACTION A; EXPANSION *a*.)

The diaphragm forming the floor of the chest becomes alternately dome-shaped (*E*) when the chest is empty, and flattened (*e*) when the chest is full.

Note also the changes in the front of the belly-wall (*C*) and (*c*).

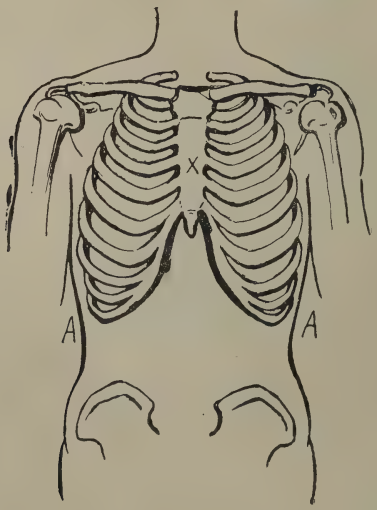


DIAGRAM B. B. — FRONT VIEW OF THE CHEST AT THE END OF EXPIRATION (LUNGS EMPTY).

A. *A*. The circumference of the lower part of the chest is diminished.

The lower edge of the chest-wall reaches nearer to the hip-bones.

The breast-bone (*X*) is nearly vertical. (See Diagram *A*. *a*.)

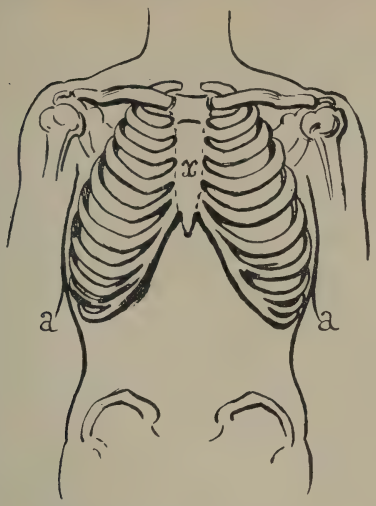


DIAGRAM B. C. — FRONT VIEW OF THE CHEST AT THE END OF INSPIRATION (LUNGS FULL).

a. *a*. The circumference of the lower part of the chest is increased.
The lower edge of the chest-wall is raised away from the hip-bones.
The breast-bone (*X*) is tilted forward so that the bone is seen foreshortened. (See Diagram *A*. *b*.)

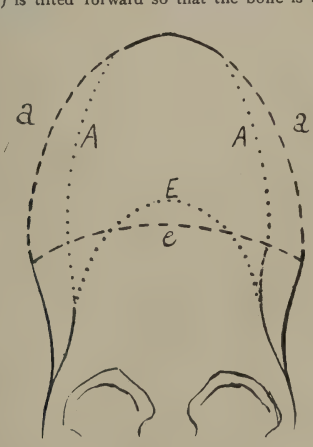


DIAGRAM B. D. — DIAGRAM SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE IN THE CHEST-WALLS WHEN THE LUNGS ARE FULL (*a*) OR EMPTY OF AIR (A).

Note the position of the diaphragm or floor of the chest in the alternate conditions — flattened after inspiration (*e*), dome-shaped after expiration (*E*).

These diagrams are by Leonard Mark, M. D., Durham, pathological draughtsman to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. It should be understood that the distentions are exaggerated in order to make the differences clear.

Having by these exercises accustomed themselves to take full inspirations, it is necessary that children should now learn to store their breath, and to use as little as possible in the production of singing tone.

Generally speaking, the rule is, "Use as little breath as possible in producing a note if that note is to be made pure and resonant." Children whose voices are husky and dull, or who sing sharp, are using too much breath. In the first case the excess of breath in escaping mixes with the tone, causing huskiness; in the second, the excess of breath results in sharp singing (see p. 59). To show how little breath is exhaled by many of the greatest vocalists, the experiment has been tried of putting a lighted candle close to their mouths, and their breath when singing has not even caused the light to flicker.

Use as little breath as possible.

To teach children to exhale there is a simple exercise which is very effective, but needs close attention and care in practice. It is as follows:—

Exercises for regulating expiration.

(1) Direct the child to take a full breath through the nose, either standing or sitting, as in Exercise No. 2. In doing so, the chin should be slightly drawn in and lowered, while the tongue is kept flat at the bottom of the mouth, the tip just touching the lower teeth.

(2) Tell the child to hold that breath in the chest and lungs while mentally counting 1, 2, 3, 4.

(3) Then let the child exhale by monotoning numbers. He should try so to hold back the breath that little is used on the first few notes, and there is thus plenty in reserve for those that follow. As this is a somewhat trying exercise, it will be well during the first lesson to sing only up to 13 or 17. Later, the class can sing up to 21, 25, 29, and 33. It is best always to

finish on the odd beat, after counting four in the bar or measure. This exercise should never be sung loudly; it is intended only to assist in regulating the expenditure of breath.

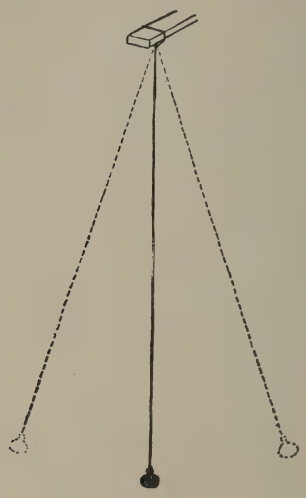
But much of course depends upon the *rate* at which the numbers are counted, or the *tempo*. One day a singer will monotone up to 21, while a week afterwards he finds himself easily able to reach 25. Yet he may not really be holding his breath longer; he has simply counted faster. To see whether real improvement has been effected, an instrument is necessary which will beat time, and which can be depended upon not to vary from day to day. The instrument generally used for this purpose is called the Metronome. It may be roughly described as a pendulum kept in motion by clockwork. Just as in many clocks the rate can be made slower or quicker by simply lengthening or shortening the pendulum, so the pendulum of the metronome can be set in such a way that it gives any desired number of oscillations, or beats, to the minute. If set to 100, it will give 100 beats to the minute, or "Metronome 100," as it is called, and the teacher can thus tell with certainty whether the child's power of holding the breath is increasing with each day's practice.

The Metronome.

The majority of children are not likely to have such an instrument as a metronome in their homes to help them when practising, but fortunately an effective substitute is easily devised. All that is necessary is to take an ordinary man's boot-button, fasten it to a piece of cotton fourteen inches long, and let it swing freely from a stick or some other support, as in the diagram on p. 53. If the cotton is exactly of the length stated, there will be 100 beats, or oscillations, to the minute, and this home-made metronome will be found to keep time quite as well as the most expensive instru-

A simple substitute for the Metronome.

ment.* In addition to enabling the child to judge his progress from day to day, it will help him to sing the numbers at a uni-



form pace and check the natural tendency to hurry as he gets short of breath.

No child should attempt to sing beyond about 37, and then only after many weeks' practice. At first he should be content with 17; then at the end of a week let him try to reach 21, then 25, and so on, aiming to add four to the total each week up to 37. (Met. 100.)

Another excellent exercise for regulating the breath is that of singing sustained notes to the vowel *ah* or *o* for 17, 21, 25, 29, 33, and 37 beats. (Met. 100.)

Choir boys will also find it good practice to sing the runs in

*A boot-button attached to a piece of cotton twenty-one inches in length (free) will oscillate eighty times in a minute (Met. 80), and if thirty-nine inches in length will oscillate sixty times a minute. (Met. 60.)

Exercise XI at end of book to one breath. Although these exercises may be trying and somewhat dull, children will certainly be glad after a while that they have persevered with them. Only by learning to regulate the breath so that it is expended to the very best advantage can any singer hope to produce the purest and most resonant, and therefore the most refined and beautiful tone.

The importance of perseverance.

CHAPTER IV.

On Intelligent Singing.

All that has so far been said deals only with what may be called the "machinery" of voice-production. But children are not machines. If they were, people would not derive half so much pleasure from hearing them sing. It is part of the charm of young voices that there are living boys and girls behind them, and when they sing not only correctly but intelligently there is no music on earth to equal them.

The charm of young voices.

To sing intelligently it is necessary, first, to phrase correctly; secondly, to sing with expression.

Correct Phrasing.

This is very closely related to the subject of breathing, dealt with in the last chapter. To phrase correctly means, roughly speaking, to take breath in the proper places. The teacher should explain that in every composition there are certain pauses between phrases and sentences that can be used for the purpose of taking breath, without in any way interfering with the sense of what is sung. But many children take breath in a most careless and haphazard way, often completely spoiling by so doing the meaning and reason of the words they convey. Below are set down some lines I have noticed choir boys phrase wrongly, with the places marked where breath ought to be taken.

Taking breath in the right places.

Wesley's "Blessed be the God" should be phrased:—

"But as He which hath called you ∨ is holy, ∨ so be ye holy ∨ in all manner ∨ of conversation ∨. Pass the time ∨ of your sojourning here ∨ in fear."

Attwood's "Turn Thy Face":

"Cast me not away ∨ from Thy presence, ∨ and take not ∨ Thy Holy Spirit ∨ from me."

Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light":

"I do not ask ∨ to see the distant scene."

Hymn 165 (Ancient and Modern):

"They fly forgotten ∨ as a dream
Dies ∨ at the opening day."

Hymn 280 (Ancient and Modern):

"Thine for ever! ∨ Saviour, keep
Us ∨ Thy frail and trembling sheep."

Children who have learned to analyse sentences will notice in all these examples that the breath marks, ∨, are placed between phrases and sentences. This should always be the case. Point out to them how absurd it is to be singing such a word as "disappointed" and to stop in the middle and take breath, as "disap ∨ pointed." It is just as wrong as it would be for them to write the word with a comma in it, thus, "disap,pointed." To take breath in the middle of a phrase is almost as bad, as, for instance, "By Killarney's ∨ lakes and fells," or "God save our ∨ gracious King." No intelligent child would dream of writing these phrases with commas, thus "By Killarney's, lakes and fells," or "God save our, gracious King." Yet many children thoughtlessly sing as though the commas were there.

The teacher will do well to explain for the benefit of younger children that in poetry, or even in an ordinary prose composition that has been written by a master of style, there is a certain regular succession of sounds, or rhythm. Composers try wherever they can to make their melodies correspond with the character of the words to which they are sung, so that pauses and emphases in the one are accompanied by pauses and emphases in the other. But this is not always possible, and singers have, to a large extent, to use their own judgment. It is a safe rule never to let the music interfere with the sense of the words. The words are the more important, and musical phrasing must, if necessary, be sacrificed to elocutional phrasing.

Never let the music interfere with the sense of the words.

If children can be made to remember the two following simple rules they will rarely have difficulty in phrasing correctly:

Two easy rules for phrasing.

(1) Take breath, should it be required, at any comma, semicolon, colon, or full stop; also between phrases and sentences.

(2) Do not take breath immediately after a transitive verb, preposition, adjective, or article.

We will now deal with the other essential to intelligent singing —

Expression.

This is a matter of the very greatest importance, because unless it has due attention a child will never, no matter how perfectly his voice is trained, become a first-rate singer. "Singing with expression" does not mean merely producing the various shades of tone required when music is marked "piano," "forte," "crescendo," "diminuendo," etc., important as these

are. It means much more. It means that when a child sings he must *feel* what he sings, and not only feel himself, but make his hearers feel. Expression marks are helpful, but if children would really excel they must do something more than merely observe them. Children should be encouraged to put themselves into their music, for if they sing what they feel, those who listen will feel what they sing. If a child makes himself a mere vocal machine, and feels nothing at all, how can he expect to arouse the sympathy, or even the interest, of his hearers? The Welsh people are excellent models in this respect, the brilliant success attained by their leading singers and choirs being largely due to the attention always given to expression.

Feel what you sing.

When a new song is put into a young singer's hands he should make a point of reading it through very carefully, and making quite sure that he understands it. Then he should be led to think about the song — is it glad or sad, peaceful, restful, comforting, war-like, demure, full of quick turns and surprises, or designed from the first to lead up to a single climax? Increase of speed gives the sense of hope and joy; slowness betokens gravity and solemnity. So we can sing loudly and softly, sternly and tenderly, and in many ways make our voices express the exact shade of meaning intended to be conveyed by the words. The great singer, in fact, is a great artist, and contrives by his song to paint a vocal picture that is as clear to the ears of all who love music as a painting would be to their eyes.

Study your music.

Point out, on the other hand, how ridiculous such a song as Handel's "Angels ever bright and fair" ("Theodora") must sound if unaccompanied by the prayerful expression the words demand; or Mendelssohn's "I will sing of Thy great mercies"

("St. Paul"), sung without the spirit of thankfulness. "Come unto Him" (Handel's "Messiah") is a gentle, pleading request which loses all charm and force unless the meaning of the words is persuasively conveyed.

There are hundreds of musical instruments, many of great value; but not one approaches in beauty the voice of a child who really *feels*.

CHAPTER V.

On Singing Out of Tune; Its Causes and Cure.

Singing out of tune, or, as it is generally called, "bad intonation," is a frequent fault of young singers. It is very disagreeable, and should by all means be avoided. When children sing rather above the note it is known as "sharp singing"; but a much more common fault is that of singing below the note, or "flat singing."

(*a.*) Sharp Singing.

This is often due to wrong breathing. Too much breath is forced through the larynx by the aid of the shoulders and the upper ribs, the air striking against the vocal cords with a "gust of breath" instead of a "gentle breeze." The vibrations of the vocal cords are thus increased beyond the proper pitch, and the tone is raised. A boy who has a whistle which gives a shrill note C, can by blowing with extra force raise the pitch to C♯.

Sharp Singing.

This is exactly what happens when young singers raise the shoulders and then lower them so that the pressure and the compression of the upper ribs force the breath too strongly through the larynx.

Another cause of sharp singing is squeezing the tone forward on the closed vowels *ê* and *î*. When this is done the notes, especially those above E, are pinched and sharp. Boys whose voices are breaking use undue effort to produce certain notes and sing sharp in consequence.

(*b.*) Flat Singing.

This is a very common fault of children and choir boys. It is caused mainly by the use of the bad forced "chest tone" (see p. 10). The strain on the delicate vocal muscles by the production of this unnatural tone is so great that it causes them to relax, and thus lowers the tone. This flattening is more apparent when children are asked to monotone, or sing on one note.

Flat Singing.

If the vocal muscles are fixed in a certain position, they are affected just as the muscles of any other part of the body would be. A child who holds out a reading book at arm's length, at right angles to the shoulder, will very soon find that his arm becomes tired, and there will be a tendency to lower the book. So, if the vocal muscles are fixed, as in monotoning with heavy "chest voice," they will soon grow tired and relax, with the result that the tone falls and we get flat singing. The sure consequences of straining the muscles by "chest voice" will be vocal fatigue and flat singing.

Other causes of singing out of tune are: —

Other causes of singing out of tune.

(1) Singing in a bad atmosphere, as in a crowded or badly ventilated hall. The lungs cannot under such conditions inhale sufficient oxygen to keep the muscles of the body in good working order.

(2) Singing when physically or mentally tired, as through over-exertion in games or studies, or through want of sleep.

(3) Singing when in ill-health.

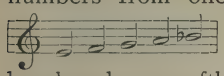
(4) Singing when the voice is breaking and cannot be controlled. (See Chapter VI.)

Cure for Singing Out of Tune.

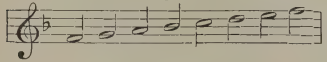
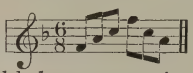
When bad intonation is the result of one of the last four causes little can be done to prevent it; but in the case of sharp-singing and flat-singing, the cure is to breathe correctly, as

explained in Chapter III, and to use the gentle voice-placing "pull" as described on page 14, and illustrated by the diagrams on pages 12 and 15. The slight trouble involved in cultivating the excellent "head voice" is well repaid by the power it gives of singing for a long time without growing tired, and at the same time singing perfectly in tune.

Users of "head voice" sing perfectly in tune.

It will, however, not infrequently be found that even children accustomed to the use of the easily produced "head voice" will sing flat when monotoning. This generally arises simply from want of attention. Choirmasters will find it an excellent plan under such circumstances to get their pupils to monotone numbers from one to ten (Met. 60) on E, F, G, A, or B♭  . Then let the note on which they began be played very softly on organ, piano, or pitch-pipe, and get the pupils to notice whether they are still strictly in tune. This will arouse interest, and children will make a determined effort to maintain the pitch. It should be impressed upon them again that all through they should have the sensation of lifting, or "pulling back" the note, as in the diagram on page 15. If the slightest shade of flattening is perceptible, let the numbers be repeated, and continue the exercise until the absolutely correct pitch is maintained from first to last. The numbers can then be increased to 15, again striking the note softly at the end to verify the pitch. In subsequent practices the numbers can be further increased to 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, and 60. When a choir has demonstrated its ability to maintain absolute correctness of pitch up to 60, which at Met. 60 would be exactly for one minute, the instructor may rest assured that he will not be further troubled by bad intonation.

It is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of

monotoning as a cure for flat-singing, for a choir which has learned to monotone in tune will sing everything else in tune. Choirmasters and organists will frequently notice on winter mornings, when the temperature of the church is low, that there is a tendency on the part of the boys to sing flat. Even boys who are carefully trained are apt to be troubled on such occasions. This may be overcome by a little preliminary practice. Take them to an adjoining room, if possible, and get them to sing scales of  F and G and arpeggios in the same keys  on the common chord. The exercises should be sung *pianissimo*, using the o (oak), ô (on), or ah (father) vowel sounds. Just as athletes find a little preliminary exertion of the muscles to be used of great advantage, so a loosening of the vocal muscles will enable choir boys to sing well in tune no matter how low the temperature of the building.

"Bad Ear."

A few children — far fewer than is generally supposed — have what is called a "bad ear" for music. That is, they do not readily distinguish between one musical sound and another, and are not able easily to imitate a note the teacher may sing or strike on piano or violin, or if they do imitate the note they quite unknowingly sing "out of tune." In such cases it is rarely the "ear" that is at fault — it is simply the result of want of training. Boys and girls, like men and women, of course differ very much in their musical capacity and in their fondness for music; but it can safely be said that quite ninety-nine per cent of our children can, with a little patience and perseverance, cultivate a "good ear," and learn to sing with pleasing voice and good intonation.

"Bad Ear" has hitherto been far more common among upper class children than among ordinary elementary school children, because the latter have enjoyed the benefits of that compulsory training in singing which is so wisely insisted upon by the educational authorities. But in recent years much has been done by the governing bodies of public schools like Harrow and Eton, and in the high-grade boarding schools and high schools, to encourage a love of music, with the result that few children at the present day entirely lack training.

"Bad Ear" generally due to lack of training.

No child should be allowed to deny himself or herself the pleasures which music affords on the plea of "no voice," or "bad ear," for both complaints are curable. The earnest teacher often finds a real delight in imparting to a child the ability to distinguish the faintest variations of musical tone, thus opening to that young mind a fairyland of enjoyment that would otherwise have been for ever sealed.

The fairyland of music.

Singing Alone.

Much more might be done by parents themselves to cultivate "good ear" in children. The little ones should be encouraged to sing at home snatches of songs and nursery rhymes, or anything that is within the compass of their voices. Even when only three or four years of age, it will be found that children pick up simple tunes quite easily, and these are a great help to them later in training their "musical ear." A great deal of the difficulty often experienced in getting children to sing when they have reached what may be called the shy, self-conscious age (say from eight to thirteen) arises less from "bad ear" than from the fact that, not being accustomed to sing alone, they fear the sound of their own voices. It is partly for this reason that I

hold, as already stated in dealing with part singing (p. 20), that it is a mistake always to practise children collectively. If they were so taught to read and recite it would be hopeless to expect correct articulation and intelligent phrasing. Only by getting them to recite individually is the teacher able to remove shyness, and to encourage fluency and precision. I believe this method is even more important in singing. Apart from the danger of permanent injury to the voice by unconscious over-exertion in class, it is only by getting children to sing individually, and letting them get used to the sound of their own voices, that their natural shyness can be overcome. Every teacher of experience is familiar with cases of adults who have gone through life deprived of the power of singing to others simply because as children they were never taught to sing alone.

It hardly needs to be pointed out that, as many children are at first extremely sensitive on this point, the greatest tact and patience must be exercised. A single cross word or irritable look may increase the child's nervousness a hundredfold, and make success almost impossible. At first, whatever the result may be, give the little singer an encouraging smile or remark, and very soon all hesitation will disappear. In class, it is a good plan to get each child to sing in turn a note of a scale, a part of an exercise, or a phrase of a song. Choirmasters will find the practice of letting each child sing individually a verse of a canticle or psalm, or a phrase of hymn or anthem, a certain means of securing self-confidence and firmness. It ought to be possible, after a short period of practice in this manner, to be able to call with confidence upon any boy to take a verse or a solo part. Certainly the choirmaster will find in an all-round improvement in the singing of his choristers an ample reward for the trouble he has taken.

CHAPTER VI.

On the Break of Voice; Signs and Treatment.

Although this book is intended primarily to furnish hints for the training of young singers, it is necessary to say something about a trouble which, sooner or later, all boys and girls have to face, and which quite prevents the former for a time from singing at all.

The term "break" is more commonly used in connection with boys' voices than with those of girls, because the change is so much more apparent in the one than in the other. But the change occurs in both sexes, usually between the ages of fourteen and fifteen, but sometimes as early as thirteen or as late as seventeen. The "break" is apparently due to an enlargement of the larynx. In boys it broadens, causing a deepening of tone in singing to the extent of an octave or more; in girls the larynx lengthens, but the voice alters very little in pitch, so little indeed that it is frequently held that there is no break at all. A want of control over the high notes will, however, be perceptible in the early stages of the change, and with girls as with boys it is necessary to exercise the very greatest care at this period. Loud singing, or attempts to force high notes or to produce low ones, will almost certainly result in permanent injury to the voice. It is frequently difficult for parents and teachers to know when the change is beginning. The following signs apply to boys:

(1) The face assumes an older expression, and there is a slight broadening of the bridge of the nose.

(2) The speaking voice becomes deeper.

Signs of breaking.

(3) The boy cannot be sure, even when placing his voice correctly, of singing in tune. He has to use unaccustomed effort to produce a note, and the result is a tendency to sing sharp.

(4) On certain notes the boy experiences difficulty in getting the full tone he has hitherto produced without effort. With some boys the lower, with others the middle, but with by far the greatest number the upper notes become weak and husky. In a week or two these notes cannot be produced at all.

It is remarkable, too, that as the time of break approaches a boy's voice becomes much more resonant and beautiful. This is so both with boys who have been trained to use their voices correctly and with those who have not. The trained boy's voice undoubtedly gets richer and fuller, but the improvement in the untrained voice is due to the fact that the boy loses the power of using the forced "chest voice," and is thus compelled to employ the easy, resonant "head voice," with its accompanying beautiful quality of tone.

Directly a boy shows any of the signs mentioned above, his singing should absolutely cease, and he should be told to use even his talking voice as little and as gently as possible. That eminent voice specialist, the late Sir Morell Mackenzie, attached great importance to this point. "The work of the voice," he wrote, "should be suspended in singing and reduced in talking during the period of break."

Boys should never sing during the period of break.

Girls may practise with advantage exercises and scales between C and E^1, on all the vowel sounds, or solos within easy compass of the voice, but it is essential that the singing should be quite effortless and free from strain. It cannot be too emphatically stated that during the period of break boys should not sing at all.

The necessity for this great care arises, of course, from the fact that from the child's voice is to evolve the mature, life-long voice, with all its possibilities. Until the period of break is over it is absolutely impossible, in the case of boys at least, to tell what the mature voice is to be, — tenor, baritone, or bass. The same may safely be said of girls, though teachers of great experience have told me that in possibly one per cent of their pupils they have been able to predict that the mature voice would be contralto.

It not infrequently happens that boys and girls who have reached this age are engaged in school teaching, or other work requiring much use of the voice. When this is the case they should be most careful not to strain their voices by speaking too loudly or too long. Dr. Wolfenden, in his excellent translation of Dr. Joal's book on "Respiration in Singing," says in the preface: "I have seen so many cases of voice failure through the effects of continuous teaching — speaking and singing — which young teachers, male and female, are called upon to exert, that the frequent occurrence cannot be regarded as accidental."

Even in speaking the voice must be used very sparingly.

The effort of speaking loudly may to some extent be lessened by pronouncing the consonants more distinctly.

Although, as I have urged, it is of the greatest possible advantage to encourage children to sing individually, it is a mistake — a very serious mistake — to ask a boy whose voice shows signs of breaking to do so. The teacher or parent has only to imagine himself in the place of the boy to realise how extremely painful and humiliating it must be to one who has enjoyed the use of a beautiful voice, responding readily to every demand, to be asked to sing, and then to be able to produce only "cracky" notes, and to have to omit some altogether.

The period during which a boy's treble changes to a man's tenor, baritone, or bass, occupies on an average about two years.

How to employ the period of vocal rest.

It may be asked, Is a youth's musical training to be entirely neglected during this period? It is certainly a long while to be debarred from the enjoyment of singing, but it by no means follows that the time need be wasted. The enforced vocal rest may indeed be turned to considerable advantage in strengthening the constitution, and in preparing for the use of the mature voice, by a systematic course of breathing exercises. All physical exercises are good for the general health, but comparatively few lads and girls at the critical age between fifteen and eighteen have unlimited opportunities of indulging in cricket, tennis, cycling, swimming, gymnastics, and other games and sports. On the other hand, healthy exercises which may be made equally beneficial can be practised by all, and the trifling cost of a book on the subject need be the only expense incurred. I would recommend that all lads and girls who wish to make the most profitable use of the important period of physical development between the ages of fifteen and eighteen should practise regularly the exercises given in Chapter III, but the numbers should be whispered, not counted audibly as there suggested. I can also recommend the following books dealing with the important subject of breathing as a means of physical development and as an aid to tone-production: — "Breathing for Voice Production," by Dr. H. H. Hulbert, published by the H. W. Gray Co., New York; and the breathing exercise contained in the "Syllabus of Physical Exercises for Use in Public Elementary Schools," published by Wyman & Sons, Fetter Lane, London, E. C.

Benefits of breathing exercises.

MUSICAL TERMS, WITH THEIR PRONUNCIATION AND MEANING.

Accelerando (at-tsel-e-ran-do). Getting faster.

Adagio (a-dah-je-o). Very slow and expressive: Met. 60, that is, about 60 beats to the minute. (See p.)

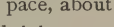
Allegretto (al-le-gret-to). Rather quickly: Met. 100, or 100 beats to the minute.

Allegro (al-ay-gro). Rather faster than allegretto: Met. 120.

Andante (an-dan-tay). Walking pace, about Met. 80.

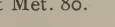
Animato (an-e-mah-to). Lively, bright.

A tempo (a tem-po). After a change of speed return to the original time.

Crescendo (cresh-en-do). Sometimes expressed Cres., or  ; getting louder.

Da Capo or D. C. (Da Cah-po). From the beginning.

Diminuendo or Dim. (dee-mee-noo-en-do). Getting softer.

Decrescendo or Decres. (de-cresh-en-do). Sometimes expressed  .

Dolce (dol-tsa). In sweet, soft style.

Fine (fe-na). The end.

Forte or F. (for-tay). Loud.

Fortissimo or F. F. (for-tee-si-mo). Very loud.

Larghetto (lar-get-to). Rather slow, about Met. 70.

Largo (lar-go). Very slow, about Met. 50.

Lento (len-to). Very slow.

Legato (le-gah-to). In a gliding, smooth manner (not scooping).

Metronome, or Met. (met-ro-nome). A clockwork instrument for measuring time in music, with an adjustable pendulum that can be fixed to tick any number of beats per minute required. Met. 100 denotes 100 beats or "ticks" to the minute. (See p. 53.)

Mezzo-forte (met-zo-for-tay). Moderately loud.

Moderato (mo-der-ah-to). At a moderate pace.

Molto (mol-to). Much.

Pianissimo, or P. P. (pe-ah-ne-se-mo). As soft as possible.

Poco (po-ko). A little.

Rallentando or Rall. (ral-len-tan-do).
Ritardando or Ritard. (re-tah-dan-do). } Gradually decreasing the pace.

Staccato (stah-kah-to). Sometimes denoted by a dot or dash over a note, means that the notes are to be short and detached.

Tempo primo (tem-po pri-mo). Return to the original time.

Tutti (too-te). Full; all voices joining in after a solo.

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